

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-15 (Canceled).

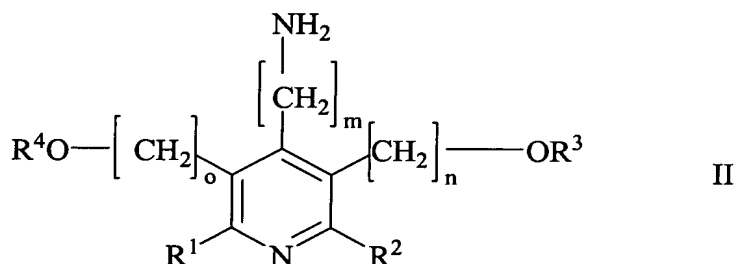
Claim 16 (New): A salt of  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid of the general formula I



wherein

Lp is racemic  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid, a racemic dihydro- $\alpha$ -lipoic acid, an (R)- or (S)-  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid, an (R)- or (S)-dihydro- $\alpha$ -lipoic acid, or a mixture thereof; and

A is at least one amine of the general formula II



wherein

R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> are, independently, hydrogen or a C<sub>1</sub>- to C<sub>6</sub>-alkyl group;

R<sup>3</sup> and R<sup>4</sup> are, independently, hydrogen, a C<sub>1</sub>- to C<sub>8</sub>-alkyl group, a C<sub>1</sub>- to C<sub>8</sub>-acyl group, a phosphate group, a diphosphate group, or a triphosphate group; and

m and n and o independently are 0, 1, 2, or 3.

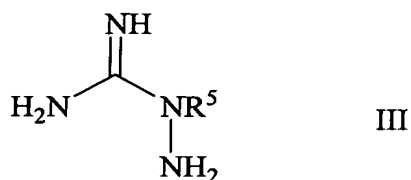
Claim 17 (New): A salt of  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid of the general formula I



wherein

Lp is racemic  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid, a racemic dihydro- $\alpha$ -lipoic acid, an (R)- or (S)-  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid, an (R)- or (S)-dihydro- $\alpha$ -lipoic acid, or a mixture thereof; and

A is at least one amine of the general formula III



wherein

R<sup>5</sup> is selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, a C<sub>1</sub>- to C<sub>6</sub>-alkyl group, a phenyl group, and a benzyl group.

Claim 18 (New): The salt according to claim 16, wherein R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> independently are hydrogen or methyl.

Claim 19 (New): The salt according to claim 16, where n is 1.

Claim 20 (New): The salt according to claim 16, wherein either n or o is greater than zero.

Claim 21 (New): The salt according to claim 16, wherein R<sup>3</sup> is hydrogen.

Claim 22 (New): The salt according to claim 16, wherein A is pyridoxamine.

Claim 23 (New): The salt of the formula I according to claim 17, where A is aminoguanidine.

Claim 24 (New): A process for preparing salts of  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid of the general formula I according to claim 16, comprising

reacting racemic  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid, racemic dihydro- $\alpha$ -lipoic acid, (R)- or (S)- $\alpha$ -lipoic acid, (R)- or (S)-dihydro- $\alpha$ -lipoic acid, or mixtures thereof with at least one amine of general formula II in solution at a temperature from 40 to 80°C; and  
isolating the thus prepared salts of  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid.

Claim 25 (New): A process for preparing salts of  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid of the general formula I according to claim 17, comprising

reacting racemic  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid, racemic dihydro- $\alpha$ -lipoic acid, (R)- or (S)- $\alpha$ -lipoic acid, (R)- or (S)-dihydro- $\alpha$ -lipoic acid, or mixtures thereof with at least one amine of general formula III in solution at a temperature from 40 to 80°C; and  
isolating the thus prepared salts of  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid.

Claim 26 (New): The process of claim 24, wherein alcohols are employed as solvents.

Claim 27 (New): The process of claim 25, wherein alcohols are employed as solvents.

Claim 28 (New): A method of preventing skin damage, unwanted changes in the appearance of the skin, or a combination thereof comprising  
applying the  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid salt of claim 16 to the skin.

Claim 29 (New): A method of preventing skin damage, unwanted changes in the appearance of the skin, or a combination thereof comprising  
applying the  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid salt of claim 17 to the skin.

Claim 30 (New): A composition comprising the  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid salt of claim 16 and an excipient.

Claim 31 (New): A composition comprising the  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid salt of claim 17 and an excipient.

Claim 32 (New): A composition comprising the  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid salt of claim 16 and a formulation base.

Claim 33 (New): A comprising the  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid salt of claim 17 and a formulation base.

Claim 34 (New): A composition comprising the  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid salt of claim 16 and a carrier.

Claim 35 (New): A composition comprising the  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid salt of claim 17 and a carrier.

Claim 36 (New): A composition comprising the  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid salt of claim 16 and a diluent.

Claim 37 (New): A composition comprising the  $\alpha$ -lipoic acid salt of claim 17 and a diluent.